



# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

## FISHING CONTEST APPLICATION (Revised 9/2005)

Any event where an entry fee is charged or where people may win prizes for catching fish in Montana is considered a fishing contest. Fishing contests involving fewer than 30 people with cash prizes or merchandise worth \$500 or less do not require a permit but must comply with all fishing contest regulations. All other contests must be permitted. No contests will be permitted for holiday weekends, and no contests are allowed involving any Montana listed species of special concern or for wild trout in rivers or streams.

### **Important Dates:**

Applications **must** be submitted between May 1 & July 1 for winter ice-fishing contests (12/1 – 3/1). Applications **must** be submitted between September 1 & November 1 for open-water contests (3/1 – 12/1).

**\*\*Late Applications WILL NOT be accepted\*\***

### **Application Requirements:**

- ☐ Mail application to: Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
Attn: Nancy Podolinsky  
1420 East 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Helena, Montana 59620-0701
- Or email application: [npodolinsky@mt.gov](mailto:npodolinsky@mt.gov)
- ☐ Copy of the draft contest rules.
- ☐ Copy of the Contest registration form.
- ☐ Copy of the boat-cleaning/gear cleaning requirements.
- ☐ Fishing Access Site Authorization: All applicants are **required** to obtain the necessary permits or paperwork authorizing the use of any non-FWP fishing access sites. The following are examples of non-FWP entities that **require** prior authorization:
  - Bureau of Reclamation - Write to: U.S. Department of Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Great Plains Office  
P.O. Box 30137  
Billings, MT 59107-0137
  - Other Federal or State agencies
  - Private landowners
- ☐ All portions of application have been completed.

**Part I. Contact Information:**

Name of Contest: \_\_\_\_\_

Contest Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II Derby Information:**

1. Dates and hours contest will be held (including starting and check-in times):

	Date	Start Time	Stop Time
1 <sup>st</sup> choice			
2 <sup>nd</sup> choice			

2. Body of water and specific section of water body where contest will be held:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Species of fish to be included in the contest: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Designated boundaries for the contest, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Location of starting and check-in points:

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6. Location and time of rules meeting:

\_\_\_\_\_

7. FWP-owned or managed lands or facilities that would be utilized or affected by contest:

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Entry fee to be charged: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Estimated number of participants: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Requirements for participation:

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11. Description and value of prizes (including amounts of cash prizes):

**PART III Other:**

1. Describe contest format including basis for awarding prizes (longest or heaviest individual or combination of fish, etc.; be specific):

2. What measures are proposed to avoid or reduce conflict with other users:

3. Other comments or information:

## FISHING CONTEST REPORT

Please return within **30 days** after the contest to:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Attn: Nancy Podolinsky  
Fisheries Division  
P.O. Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620-0701

MFWP Use Only

Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Fwd to Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Contest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Form Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Contest Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Contest Date (M/D/Y) \_\_\_\_\_ Body of Water: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Participants: \_\_\_\_\_ # Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual Contest  
Participants: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Montana Residents: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Non-Residents: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Boats (if  
applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Size of Winning Fish: \_\_\_\_\_

### HOURS FISHED:

Day	Start Time	Stop Time	Total Hours	# Fish Caught	# Fish Released
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

### NUMBER OF FISH CAUGHT:

Species Type	Total Number Caught	Minimum Length Required for Contest	Number Released	Number Died

**OTHER INFORMATION:** (if required)

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**COMMENTS:**

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**OPTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The following information is optional, but would be of interest for management purposes.

**Body of Water:**

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Water Level:	_____ Up	_____ Down	_____ Normal
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Air Temperature:	_____ Degrees F	Water Temperature:	_____ Degrees F
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Water Clarity:	_____ Clear	_____ Semi-turbid	_____ Muddy
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**SIZE DISTRIBUTION OF FISH CAUGHT:**

*Please record all fish caught that were 8 inches or longer.*

Species	Size in Inches															
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Largemouth bass																
Smallmouth bass																
Yellow perch																
Brown trout																

*Please record all fish caught that were 12 inches or longer.*

Species	Size in Inches																		
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30+
Walleye																			
Rainbow trout																			
Burbot (ling)																			
Pike																			
Bull trout																			

# **MONTANA FISHING CONTEST LAWS AND RULES**

## **MONTANA STATUTES**

**87-3-121. Conditions for award of prizes.** (1) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation, association, or club to offer or give any prize, gift, or anything of value in connection with or as a bag limit prize for the taking, capturing, killing, or in any manner acquiring any game, fowl, fur-bearing animals, or any bird or animal now or that shall be hereafter protected in any way by the fish and game laws of the state of Montana.

(2) The commission shall adopt rules to regulate contests by a person, firm, corporation, association, or club that intends to offer or give a prize, gift, or anything of value in connection with or as a prize for the taking, capturing, killing, or in any manner acquiring fish that are protected under Title 87. The commission's rules must be based on the commission's duty under Title 87 to protect, preserve, and propagate fish in the state.

(3) This section shall not be construed to prohibit the award of prizes for any one game bird or fur-bearing animal on the basis of size, quality, or rarity.

**History:** En. Sec. 1, Ch. 82, L. 1935; re-en. Sec. 3744.1, R.C.M. 1935; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 48, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 26-809; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 346, L. 1987.

## **FWP Rules for Regulation of Fishing Contests**

[12.7.801 DEFINITION](#) (1) "Fishing contest" is any event, contest, derby or tournament where an entry fee is charged or where people are expected to compete to win prizes or cash based on the capture of an individual fish or combination of fish. Fishing contests involving fewer than 30 people with cash prizes or merchandise worth \$500 or less do not require a permit but must comply with the provisions of this subchapter.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.802 APPLICATION](#) (1) Any individual, club, organization or business wishing to sponsor a fishing contest on a body of water open to public fishing must submit an application to the department of fish, wildlife and parks as specified in this rule.

(2) Applications must be submitted between September 1 and November 1 for open water contests proposed for the following March 1 through December 1;

(a) applications for benefit fundraising contests received later than November 1 may be accepted.

(3) Applications must be submitted between May 1 and July 1 for ice fishing contests proposed for the following December 1 through March 1;

(a) applications for benefit fundraising contests received later than July 1 may be accepted.

(4) Contest sponsors must provide documentation that they have approval to use each fishing access site not under the ownership or control of the department that is listed in the application.

(5) Contest sponsors are responsible for notifying participants of any public safety concerns associated with the contest.

(6) Contest sponsors are responsible for notifying participants that boats and trailers must be cleaned before and after the contest to prevent transport and introduction of aquatic nuisance species.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.803 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION](#) (1) The department will evaluate the application based on the following criteria:

a) impacts of the contest on the fish population of the host body of water, the aquatic ecosystem and

the immediate area;

- b) Compatibility of the contest with fisheries management objectives for the water;
  - (c) purse or participation limits (limits may or may not be imposed depending upon public comments received or potential conflict with other users);
  - (d) conflicts with other contests proposed for a body of water;
  - (e) compliance with contest rules, conditions or reporting requirements for previously sponsored contests;
  - (f) environmental conditions (such as relevant historic high water temperatures) and compatibility of check-in format with successful release of live fish for catch and release contests; and
  - (g) contest boundaries.
- (2) The department will give public notice of all contests and provide an opportunity for public comment on each application.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.804 COMPETING APPLICATIONS (1) When two or more contests are proposed on a single body of water the department will approve applications which:

- (a) offer the best opportunities for public benefits by furthering knowledge of angling ethics and aquatic ecology;
  - (b) have been approved historically;
  - (c) have had good participation; and
  - (d) have a good record of compliance.
- (2) The department may request that applicants competing for a permit on the same or consecutive weekends resolve conflicts and allocate limited dates among themselves.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.805 DEPARTMENT DECISION (1) The department will issue a decision regarding applications no later than February 1 for open water contests or October 1 for ice-fishing contests. The department may approve an application as submitted, approve an application with modifications or deny an application. When an application is approved with modifications, the applicant must respond to the department within 20 days of receipt of the department's written decision if the modifications are unacceptable. Failure to do so will constitute acceptance of the decision.

(2) An application may be denied if in the opinion of the department any of the following are found to exist:

- (a) the contest will have detrimental impacts on fish populations, the aquatic ecosystem or the surrounding area;
  - (b) the contest would conflict with management goals for the host water;
  - (c) the contest conflicts with other proposed contests or intended uses of the host water;
  - (d) the proposed contest would be held during a period of heavy recreational use on the host body of water, increasing the likelihood of conflicts with other users; and
  - (e) there is significant public opposition to the proposed contest based on biological or recreational conflict concerns. Public comments will be provided to the sponsor on request.
- (3) Conditions may be placed on contests to:
- (a) minimize fish mortality in catch and release contests;
  - (b) regulate harvest;

- (c) reduce user conflicts; or
- (d) require supplemental trash removal, restroom facilities, or other maintenance at department access sites when routine facilities and maintenance are inadequate for the contest.
- (4) Contests may not be scheduled and approved for consecutive weekends on any body of water less than 100,000 surface acres in size.
- (5) Contests may not be scheduled on holiday weekends, including but not limited to Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day.
- (6) The department will notify the applicant of its decision by mail. The department shall notify the public with an announcement released to all major state newspapers and through notice published on the department website.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA  
IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.806 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS](#) (1) Within 30 days after an approved fishing contest, the sponsor shall report to the department information on the success of contest participants on forms provided at the time of contest approval.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA  
IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.807 PROHIBITED CONTESTS](#) (1) Contests involving any Montana listed species of special concern are prohibited except the following:

- (a) Contests are allowed for lake/reservoir stocked Yellowstone cutthroat trout ([Oncorhynchus clarki bouvieri](#)) or westslope cutthroat trout ([Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi](#)) including upper Missouri cutthroat trout.
- (2) All contests involving wild trout ([Salmo Onchorynchus](#) or [Salvelinus](#)) in streams/rivers are prohibited.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA  
IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.808 WAIVER](#) (1) Upon a showing of good cause, the department may waive the application of any rule except where waiver is precluded by statute.

(2) During approved catch-and-release fishing contest hours, fish caught for contest purposes and released alive by contest participants are not considered part of their daily limit. Contest participants may not have more than the daily limit in their possession at any time. All fish must be released alive at the end of the day unless the fish died as a result of handling during the contest.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA  
IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.809 APPEAL TO THE COMMISSION](#) (1) The applicant or any person supporting or opposing an application may appeal the decision of the department to the commission. An appeal may be made on any grounds or arguments made to the department during the department's evaluation and consideration of the application. A notice of appeal must be filed with the commission within 20 days of written notice of the department's decision.

(2) The commission's decision to approve the application as submitted, to approve the application with modifications or to deny the application will be made on the criteria of ARM [12.7.805](#). The



commission's decision will be final. (History Sec. 87-2-121 MCA; IMP, Sec. 87-3-121 MCA; New, 1995 MAR p. 367, Eff. 3/17/95.)